

# FORUM ON TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT CHARTER

Revised 11/12/04

## BACKGROUND

Surface transportation requirements in Idaho will become a major challenge over the next 10 years.

Infrastructure demands associated with roadway construction, maintenance, public transportation, and vehicle operations will be fueled by Idaho's continuing emergence as a competing economic center, by the impact of a diversifying economic base, by the attraction of the Idaho "quality of life", and by the corresponding accelerated aging of the existing Idaho surface transportation infrastructure.

~~Innovative, efficient and responsive transportation financing mechanism and funding will be needed to meet long-term system expansion demands for roadway and public transportation infrastructure and operation. This demand is being fueled by Idaho's emergence as a major economic center, the impact of a diversifying economic base, the quality of life available here and the aging infrastructure.~~ Several studies in the last 10 years have identified improvements to the state surface transportation system in excess of \$3.8 Billion. Local road systems are estimated to require as much again.

In the last two years, Legislative sessions have seen new funding proposals for surface transportation that include authorization for local option taxes, increased funding to local units of government through increased vehicle registration fees, and changes to commercial vehicle fee structures. All are the result of efforts – in the face of static or shrinking revenue sources – to meet the challenges of short- and long-term demands in such areas as roadway system maintenance, roadway system expansion, public transportation and congestion mitigation, to name a few.

Traditional funding, combined with new innovative financing mechanisms, will need to be integrated with efficient and responsive planning to meet the transportation expectations of a growing population.

Idaho will face many significant challenges in the future. Growth will impact life in urban and rural communities across the state. Business forces are at work changing the very nature of our state's economics.

Much of Idaho's future will be largely written by decisions made in the next few years. These decisions must be made carefully, addressing the state's transportation issues holistically and with a clear understanding of the many elements contributing to both transportation mobility and connectivity.

Now is the time to initiate an effort to examine and understand future Idaho surface transportation requirements and funding approaches available to meet these requirements. It is important that there be a forum in which interested parties can have a place to share their ideas.

~~In order to provide a way to discuss and shape this future, the Idaho Transportation Board established in May 2004 a Forum on Transportation Investment (FTI) for Idaho's Transportation Future.~~ In May 2004, the Idaho Transportation Board established the Forum on Transportation Investment so that Idaho elected officials, business and industry leaders, and community leaders might have the opportunity to bring forward recommendations on how to shape the ~~investment in~~ Idaho future investment in the Idaho surface transportation system.

## GOAL

The goal of the Forum on Transportation Investment is two-fold: 1) To establish an understanding of the needs and demands for transportation improvements and of the available options for financing and funding Idaho's transportation system; 2) From this understanding, to make recommendations to the Idaho Transportation Board on how to shape future investment in the Idaho surface transportation system. ~~The result is an ongoing set of proposals/options/recommendations leading to long term consistent and coordinated solutions that address these critical needs.~~

## ROLE

The role of the Forum will be to:

- Hear presentations and input
- Propose/endorse policy and funding options or recommendations
- Bring critical thinking and credibility to project products
- Educate Forum participants through cross-forum communication

This Forum will address their role in three focus areas.

1. **Current Financing/Funding Options** - An array of current funding options will be assembled listing traditional and non-traditional sources of transportation revenue. The purpose of this step is to ensure that all currently available funding sources are or will be maximized before seeking new revenue sources.
2. **Understanding the Demand** - Through the use of existing data, and the transportation planning efforts already in place – ~~both~~ as well as other public input processes – a summary of Idaho's needs will be developed and communicated in a clear and concise manner.
3. **Future Innovative Financing and Revenue Options** - Just as the practice of transportation is evolving and changing each year, the opportunities for new or different revenue streams for transportation continue to present themselves. This focus will address the various options available and create an understanding of how they might play a role in meeting Idaho's transportation needs into the future.

## MEMBERSHIP

Members are drawn from local officials, associations' leadership, business leaders, citizens and others who represent Idaho's urban and rural interests and communities. Ex-officio members include individuals from the legislature and Governor's office.

~~The role of the Forum will:~~

~~Hear presentations and input;  
React/endorse policy and funding options or recommendations;  
Bring critical thinking and credibility to project products;  
Educate key decision makers;  
Create a cadre of respected spokespersons on the subject of transportation finance in Idaho.~~

## **LEADERSHIP**

The Chairman for the Forum on Transportation Investment (FTI) appointed by the ITD Board Chairman is Jim Kempton. The Vice-Chairman, elected at the first meeting, is Mayor Tom Dale.

## **FORUM METHODOLOGY**

The Forum shall examine all elements of surface transportation including highways, rail, and transit by doing the following:

1. Examine, document, and assess Idaho's transportation needs through 2030 including ~~these~~ needs already documented by state and local government;
2. Investigate and determine if there are additional needs deemed critical by state and local elected officials;
3. Examine current transportation finance tools and assess their current and future viability;
4. Investigate and assess additional financing tools and assess their future viability;
5. Overlay the identified aggregate transportation needs and demands with potential funding options, and assess Idaho's ability to meet mobility and connectivity requirements in the future;
6. Recommend actions, policies, and options that will shape future investment in the Idaho surface transportation system; and
7. Compile a final report of options and recommendations for consideration by the Idaho Transportation Board.

## **COMPLETION**

November 2005